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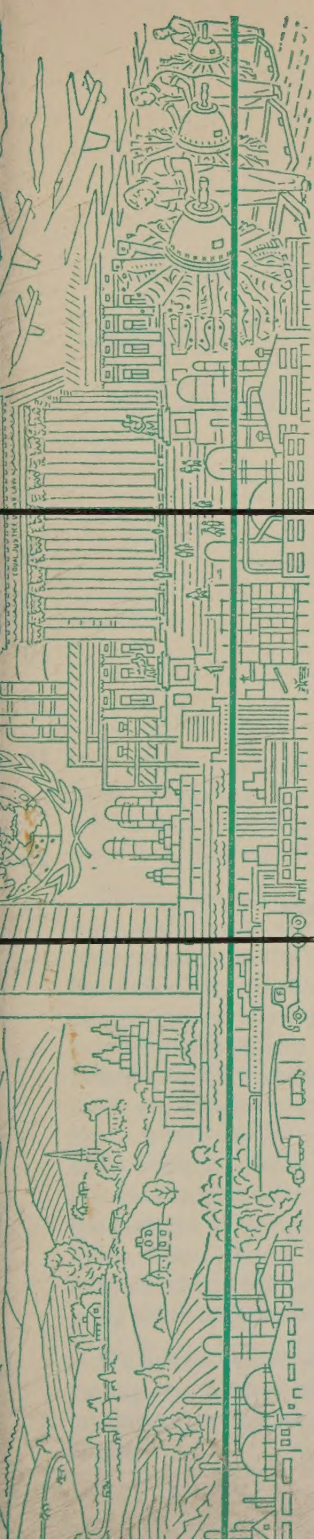

A Social Progress Reprint

RESIDENTIAL DESEGREGATION

THE CHURCH'S NEW FRONTIER

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RESIDENTIAL DESEGREGATION

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September 1958

From This Vantage Point

THIS issue of SOCIAL PROGRESS contains two features: a consideration of problems and solutions relative to desegregation in private housing, and the text of a survey on racial patterns in 4,766 formerly Presbyterian U.S.A. churches.

The survey, which was ordered by the 169th General Assembly, was conducted by the Department of Social Education and Action and reported to the 170th (uniting) General Assembly in Pittsburgh last May. It shows, among other things, that a nonsegregated church is virtually impossible for nearly 90 per cent of our white congregations simply because they are located in communities and neighborhoods in which no Negro families now live. In many, if not most, of these communities, a Negro family could not ordinarily buy a house according to present patterns of exclusion, regardless of its financial resources. A church that sees life whole will inevitably see the interrelatedness of the patterns of community life with the patterns of church life. *Persons* live there or are prevented from living there. Hence, the first part of this issue of SOCIAL PROGRESS considers the problems of residential desegregation and suggests some approaches to solutions.

We have no illusions about any uniformity of feeling or thinking among our readers on this subject. Therefore, to try to minimize misunderstanding we should like to make three things clear at the outset:

1. We are not trying to "convert" anyone. This issue is intended primarily for the use of those who already "believe in" integrated living patterns and are seeking effective and acceptable ways of achieving them.

2. The United Presbyterian Church U.S.A., like every other major denomination, has corporately committed itself in principle to "a nonsegregated church and a nonsegregated society." With a few significant regional exceptions, there is in the church little or no *public* debate about the validity of this commitment. The debate comes, if it comes, when someone raises the question of whether this commitment is immediately relevant (and if so, in what way) to "our situation."

3. Not all regions of the United States will find that conscious effort to work for residential desegregation is an immediate and viable possibility. In some sections equal opportunity in schools, employment, and public accommodations, or the re-establishing of communication between the minority and the majority races demands more urgent attention. However, it is safe to say that in nearly every metropolitan area of the North and West segregation in private housing is the major, though not the only, obstacle to the achievement of "a nonsegregated church and a nonsegregated society," of fellowship in the sanctuary and justice in the community.

We are indebted for assistance on the first part of this issue to many persons and agencies, not the least of whom is Dr. Alfred S. Kramer of the National Council of Churches' Department of Racial and Cultural Relations. Readers who wish to supplement this material in SOCIAL PROGRESS are encouraged to write Dr. Kramer at 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N.Y. for the September-October issue of *Interracial News Service*, which is devoted to the same subject—approaches to desegregation in the area of private housing.

—The SEA Staff

THE PROBLEMS

—of residential segregation

Is segregation the problem? Or prejudice? Or property values? Or the practices of lending institutions? Or the policies of realtors? Or what? The mental image of "the problem" (how it is conceptualized) inside the heads of those who would like to see it solved determines to a large extent the kinds of solutions that are sought and the methods employed to seek them.

For some white homeowners, it must be recognized, the problem is how to keep Negro buyers out. Their efforts to solve *their* problem constitute one of the problems of those who would like to see an open housing market develop—one in which color has nothing to do with buying a house. But this is not The Problem. It is only one of many. It may be helpful to consider first two main categories of problems—the changing neighborhood and the closed community.

The Changing Neighborhood

Inside the urban fringe of most cities in the North and West are the older but still good and livable houses. These are not slums or blighted areas and need not become so. Into these areas, formerly or still all white, families of the growing Negro middle class are buying or will soon buy. This movement of middle-income Negro families out from the ghetto is as inevitable as the rising of the sun.

Why are Negroes in ever-increasing numbers buying homes in these formerly all-white neighborhoods? The reasons are quite simple:

1. Negroes are people who like to live in decent houses.
2. More and more Negroes are earning and saving enough money to buy a decent house.
3. White home buyers with the same number of dollars can buy a *new* house with *more land* for *less money* in the suburbs than in the city. The Negro cannot.
4. Except for the relatively few white home buyers who prefer an older house in the city, the Negro buyers are the only major bidders for these city houses.
5. As of now these older but good houses are the only real housing market in which a Negro's dollars will be accepted for a decent house.

Hence, the racially changing neighborhood inside the urban fringe is or will be the inevitable pattern for most of our great cities in the North and West.

Some private housing opportunities thus do exist for some Negroes already. But this restricted market has some unfortunate consequences. Here are a few of them:

1. The changing neighborhood tends to keep changing in the same direction until it becomes an extension of, though an improvement upon, the Negro ghetto.

2. An improved Negro ghetto is still a ghetto, and tends to stamp those who live in it as "inferior" in the eyes of those who are free to move because of their white skin.

3. The pressure of Negro housing needs and buying power continues to be greater than the opportunities offered by the limited areas in which an open housing market prevails.

4. Until the suburbs and other new housing "open up" to accept Negro dollars for houses, dispersion is virtually impossible and "clotting" seems inevitable, with attendant political evils (e.g., appeals to voting blocs on the basis of race) and social and economic conflict (e.g., the suburbs against the city).

For those who seek residential desegregation the problem of opening up equal housing opportunities is not the primary problem within the city (the Negro with $4,000 in his pocket looking in vain for the house to suit *his* tastes might see it differently). These opportunities *will* be opened up even if they do nothing. They will be kept busy dealing with problems like these:

1. Stemming tendencies toward panic selling in changing neighborhoods by white families who are afraid.

2. Combating rumors about new Negro neighbors.

3. Minimizing the possibilities of violence or property damage.

4. Building neighborliness and a sense of community pride and responsibility.

5. Seeing that public services—police and fire protection, trash collection, street lighting and repair, zoning ordinance enforcement, health and safety inspections—are maintained.

Possible approaches to these problems are suggested on page 10.

The Closed Community

In the North and West the forces of religion, politics, economics, and society are favorable to ever-increasing equal private housing opportunities *within* the urban fringe. But beyond the desegregating city is the community that is closed to Negro home buyers (which makes housing opportunities unequal in the over-all picture). This community is typically the white suburb, beyond it the exurb, and beyond that the small city and the larger town. These may have their own small Negro ghetto, whose boundary is clearly and sharply understood by nearly everyone, although it appears on no map. This ghetto may or may not be a slum. Frequently it is. And as in most slum areas, the incidence of rental units is high, family-owned units low.

In these nonurban communities, nearly all the political, economic, and social forces are arrayed *against*

residential desegregation. The forces of religion are likely to be silent on the subject unless an "incident" occurs. Except for isolated instances that are by no means characteristic, no significant residential desegregation is likely to happen here in the immediate future unless concerned persons of both races help it to happen. Meanwhile the extension of the Negro ghetto continues within the urban fringe.

Within this area of the great cities, and frequently in the older sections, there are usually a number of groups —neighborhood and city-wide, public and private—that are concerned about residential desegregation. Some of them will have trained staff persons. But in the newer outlying sections of the city, the suburb, the exurb, and the towns beyond, there will be one or two such groups at most, usually none. Even if they exist they will not have trained, full-time staff persons. In the cities, these groups will spend much of their time and energies, not in opening up private housing opportunities, but in keeping up with the openings, sales, and attendant tensions that develop as a matter of course. Outside the cities such a group will have little, if any, trouble keeping up with minority housing opportunities. There won't be many until some group deliberately locates or creates them.

These then are the two categories of tasks connected with residential desegregation:

1. In the older sections inside the urban fringe, making the already-started or about-to-begin racial transformation proceed as smoothly and constructively as possible and trying to stabilize and disperse it as much as possible.

2. Outside the urban fringe (and in the newer sections of the city) opening the doors of the closed community to qualified minority families.

The two categories are different, their problems are different, and approaches to solutions are different. Generally speaking, it might be said that churches located in the context of the first category have a real interest, in terms of both membership and finances, in stabilizing their situation. Churches located in the context of the second category have a less obvious interest—in terms of their own theological integrity—in easing the racial rigidity of their situation.

Meanwhile, the longer the closed community remains closed (and, from the point of view of the white families who desire to keep it closed, has "no racial problem"), the more intense and magnified grow the problems of the changing and about-to-change urban neighborhood.

STATISTICAL BACKGROUND

—to help explain the problems

During the last two decades sweeping economic, social, and legal changes have taken place in the structure of relationships between white and Negro groups. Cause and effect are intertwined. A partial knowledge of some of these changes is essential to any realistic understanding of the problems of residential desegregation.

1. Total U. S. Negro population increased by over 2 million from 1940 to 1950. The total Negro population of seven Southern states decreased, while that of eight Northern industrial states increased by 1.5 million. Negro movement is from South to North, from rural areas to urban centers.

2. Forty-five U. S. cities had an increase of over 100 per cent in their Negro populations. All except two are outside the South.

3. Negro per capita income tripled between 1940 and 1950, white per capita income did not quite double. But average white income is still almost twice that of Negro ($2,020, as compared with $1,070).

4. In 1940, 20 per cent of urban Negroes owned their own homes; in 1950 the figure had increased to 33 per cent. It is still higher today. Ownership is higher among whites, but the *rate of increase* is twice as high among Negroes.

5. Population increase in Northern metropolitan areas was almost entirely nonwhite in the city, almost entirely white in the suburbs (83 per cent of the urban increase was nonwhite, 83 per cent of the suburban increase was white.)

6. From 1935 to 1955, 9 million new private housing units were built. Less than 1 per cent were available to the Negro 10 per cent of the population.

7. In metropolitan areas, four out of every five new postwar houses were built in the suburbs. Not only these new suburban houses, but also nearly all new urban houses, were closed to Negro buyers. Typical examples:

- In metropolitan Philadelphia 140,000 new private housing units were built from 1946 to 1953. Of these, 1 per cent were available to the 13 per cent of the area's population that was Negro.
- In Toledo during the last twelve years, 8,338 new units were built. Of these, 40 sales units and no rentals were available to the area's Negro population.
- In metropolitan Detroit, 140,000 units were built. Only 1 per cent of these were available to the area's Negro population, which constituted 14 per cent of the total.

8. From 1940 to 1950 the white population increased by 14 per cent and the number of dwelling units lived in increased by 23 per cent. Crowding decreased. The reverse was true for the Negro population, which increased by 15 per cent, while the number of dwelling units increased by only 10 per cent.

9. Negro and white families can and do live in the same block peacefully as neighbors:

- In Philadelphia, 88,209 Negro families (88 per cent) and 108,503 white families (22 per cent) live in desegregated blocks.

  This desegregated living is in 3,592 (or 27 per cent) of the city's residential blocks.

  In 1,965 blocks, at least half of the households are white; in 1,627 blocks, Negro families predominate.

10. Crime and juvenile delinquency rates are high in slum areas where overcrowding, poverty, unemployment, heavy traffic, substandard housing, and unenforced public health and safety measures predominate. These factors are not racially determined. *Slum conditions are not* ***caused*** *by a heavy concentration of Negro residents.* The slums were there before Negroes arrived in great numbers, occupied by people who were not permitted or were not able to live elsewhere. As their economic status improved they were replaced by Negro migrations. *Slums help* ***produce*** *a heavy concentration of Negro residents who are funneled in by the thousand and are permitted to escape only by the score.*

APPROACHES TO SOLUTIONS

—that have worked

The changing neighborhood needs to be stabilized. The closed community needs to be opened. The former is a difficult, if not losing, battle until the latter begins to give way. Metaphorically speaking, the flow of nonwhite families into the center city slums is a *river*; the flow out from the center city to older urban housing is a *stream*; the flow to the new housing in the suburbs is a *trickle* or hasn't started yet.

IN THE CHANGING NEIGHBORHOOD

THE problems of the changing neighborhood can be solved. The final solution will be the removal of racial restrictions from the [whole] housing market so that [financially able] Negro families can buy houses on the open market along with other people who can afford to pay for [them]. Negro families will then be able to move into any part of the metropolitan area and not be forced to live in 'marked-off' sections. Some states [e.g., New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut] have adopted laws which prohibit racial discrimination in the sale or rental of housing.

"Until such laws are passed, however, you as a responsible citizen can contribute toward a final solution . . . by working with your neighbors and using the program suggested [here]. This program has worked for others and it can work for you and your neighborhood." [1] The keys to neighborhood stability and high standards are leadership, interpretation, organization, and implementation.

1. ***Give leadership and interpretation:***

In many changing communities church leadership or its absence has been a crucial factor in determining whether a neighborhood integrated in neighborliness or "disintegrated" in panic or even violence.

Not the coming of Negro residents, but how the white residents react decides whether

- Property values temporarily decline or not,
- Neighborhood morale drops or rises,
- A few unscrupulous real estate agents make "a killing" or not,
- Property turnover rate continues normally or becomes alarmingly high,
- The neighborhood becomes racially integrated or all-Negro,
- Physical standards and community services are maintained.

People need to understand what is

[1] From *What to Do*, packet prepared by the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations, from which most of this section is derived.

going on; rumors need to be met with facts; the newcomers need to be given the opportunity to meet and be met by the "old-timers." *Some of this interpretation can take place within the regular life of the church.* An occasional *sermon* can interpret the facts in the light of the gospel, the Word of God. A family night, youth fellowship, women's circle, or laymen's council program can use a film, a panel, or a forum to elucidate what is happening. Opportunities to get acquainted can be provided by pastoral and lay calls that invite participation in the church's life and worship and do not inquire as to the color of a family's skin or its place of origin. Theologically speaking, no "special" session authorization is required for these things to take place. In fact, there is real question as to whether "special" formal consideration by the session is practically or theologically wise in this situation.

2. ***Create an organization:***

Unless there is already a social action or community affairs committee in the church, organization for neighborhood stabilization might better take place outside the church on an interfaith basis. A relatively small proportion of the residents of a neighborhood are likely to be members of the same church. But participation by a majority of them is needed in any neighborhood council or "block club." Church members who are residents, however, are in a good position to give leadership to the formation of a neighborhood group. *Somebody* must give positive leadership and take initiative or else the most irresponsible community elements are likely to take charge.

3. ***Implement with a meeting:***

It will be the first of many others if the group is to be effective. The following letter of invitation, "Suggestions About Neighborhood Meetings," and "Sample Agenda and Meeting Guide" are reproduced and slightly modified by permission of the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations, 800 Commercial Trust Building, Philadelphia 7, Pa.

Dear Neighbor:

At the suggestion of a number of your neighbors in the vicinity of the _____ block of _____ Street, a meeting has been arranged to discuss the situation that exists in our neighborhood.

What can be done to combat panic selling in the face of a changing population? What can be done to promote the maintenance and improvement of high neighborhood standards? These questions must be answered in a practical and common-sense way for the benefit of all residents.

You are welcome to attend this meeting at _____ P.M. on _____ at _____. Inform your neighbors and invite them to attend also. We look forward to meeting with you.

(signed)
(address and phone)

Suggestions About Neighborhood Meetings in Racially Changing Areas

There are three kinds of meetings that have been held successfully to deal with problems in racially changing areas:

Block Meeting—which includes residents of a single block of a street. This type of meeting is usually small, very informal. Any block resident is eligible to participate. This meeting has the advantage of real grass-roots contact and a democratic basis. On

the other hand, it may be hard to find leadership on a single block. If blocks federate, the resulting group may become top-heavy with organization since every block in a neighborhood would be represented.

Neighborhood Leadership Meeting—includes the key persons, opinion makers, and most informed residents of an area. Very often this kind of meeting is called by some institution (church, synagogue, etc.), and representatives may be from other institutions. This group can bring strong, intelligent influence to bear on problems, but may not have adequate knowledge of the feelings and tendencies of the residents of particular blocks.

Simple Membership Meeting—includes anyone in the entire neighborhood who is committed personally to working on the changing neighborhood problem. Participation can be drawn from many areas of the neighborhood. These groups are usually most efficient and are composed of reliable people. As disadvantages, these groups have to contend with the danger of becoming isolated elites or personalized cliques instead of networks for neighborhood education.

Any of these meeting types or combinations of them may be used, depending upon the needs of your area. Certain other factors about such meetings should be stressed:

- The meeting should be small (25 people top limit). To discuss racial change, a question that is emotionally loaded for many people, in a large group is usually a mistake.
- The meeting should be called or chaired by someone from the area who is *known, respected, not unacceptable to residents because he is highly controversial.*
- Although the meeting should be open to all residents, some care should be taken to ensure that the clear majority of those attending are stable and reasonable people. Extremists should be in the minority.
- The meeting should be held on "neutral" ground, that is, a place that people will feel free to come to without feeling that they are under the auspices of any specific religious, political, ethnic, etc., group.
- It is preferable to hold block meetings in a home. This is an informal atmosphere that sets a tone of neighborliness. Evening meetings are best, but shopping nights and those on which important or popular TV shows are scheduled should be avoided. The meeting time should be late enough so that parents can put children to bed before attending.
- **Be sure that the purpose of the meeting is clear. Take care to avoid any rumor or suggestion that the meeting is being held to keep nonwhites out of the area. The meeting must be clearly designated as one at which the question of neighborhood change will be *discussed*.**
- Be sure that leadership is firm enough to set an informal, friendly tone for the meeting. Opposing points of view should be freely accepted, but conflicts should not be violently expressed. The tone of controversy should not dominate. The tone of reasonable, practical discussion should.
- Set specific goals for the meeting. Responsibility should be fixed

and some provision should be made for people to report back.

• Keep track of time. Having some coffee and tea on hand for the session adds a note of relaxation and friendliness.

Sample Agenda

Experience in racially changing neighborhoods has indicated that the following agenda is a workable plan for the first meeting of a group to discuss neighborhood changes:

Part I—Introduction (*10 minutes*)

A. The person who called the meeting introduces himself and explains why he invited people to come together, stating:

1. Our neighborhood is changing racially. This experience involves all of us.

2. *The city's Commission on Human Relations* (*or equivalent*) has experience with this problem and has services available that might be useful to us. *We have also secured materials to help us face our situation responsibly.*

B. Those present are asked to introduce themselves by giving their name and address and the name of any group they might represent. A pad should be passed around to record attendance, addresses, and phone numbers.

Part II—Presentation of Material and Discussion of Situation (*1 hour*)

A. The person who has called the meeting presents the material (or film), which should be concise and manageable enough to be read (or viewed) before proceeding farther. A turnover chart might be prepared and used in the absence of a film or filmstrip. If a film is used, it should be carefully previewed first.

(Two excellent brief leaflets are *Interracial Neighborhoods in New Jersey Communities*, available free in limited quantities from the state Division Against Discrimination, 1100 Ramond Boulevard, Newark, New Jersey; and "'Restricted' Area: Does It Pay?" a reprint from *U.S. News & World Report*, available free in limited quantities from the National Committee Against Discrimination in Housing, 35 West 32d Street, New York 1, N. Y. Films on this topic are scarce. One developed by the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations, *The House Across the Street*—a strip—is available in the Eastern seaboard region from the PCHR.)

B. After the material has been presented in a positive and constructive manner, discussion of the immediate situation is encouraged. Differences of opinion should not be suppressed, but extreme expression of fear or rumor should be firmly and pleasantly discouraged. The tone of the meeting should be directed toward "What we can do to keep our neighborhood a good place to live regardless of the color of our neighbors, who are here to stay." The tone set at the beginning is very important.

Part III—Take Steps to Prevent Panic (*25 minutes*)

A. Organize a committee, either formally or informally, to guide work in the neighborhood.

B. Agree on what definite jobs need to be done and obtain agreement on who is to do them.

Such jobs might include:

Visiting other neighbors, local realtors, or new families; talking to neighborhood leaders, clergymen, school principals, etc.

Investigating local nuisances or housing violations.

C. Distribute any literature that has been made available to the group.

D. Set the date and place of next meeting. Pick the topic to be discussed at the next meeting; perhaps race, the housing code, zoning code, community relations in the local police district, local real estate tactics.

E. After the meeting is over, two or three who gave evidence of positive response and leadership capacity should be asked to remain for evaluation. They may decide whether professional help should be sought for the next meeting.

4. ***Implement with action:*** During the meeting(s) plans should be made and committees assigned to carry out the following essential tasks: [2]

• Urge people to remain calm and stay put—most neighbors won't want to move if assured they are not alone. If they deliberately wanted to send the value of their properties down, they could hardly accomplish this more efficiently than by rushing to put them up for sale. The cost of running away is too high. There can be no mass move-ins of any people of any race unless those now living there flee.

• Be fair to all newcomers—few people buy a house without feeling that they have a large stake in keeping the neighborhood a "good place to live." Welcome newcomers whatever their color, and draw them into the group. Give them their share of responsibility in helping maintain high standards. Get to know them as persons rather than as "that Negro family."

• Squelch rumors—*get the facts;* publish them in a neighborhood bulletin. Do not permit prejudgments about a race to be applied to individuals. Rumors, unless met firmly and quickly, can be disastrous.

• Guard against unethical real estate practices—a few unscrupulous real estate dealers (of both races, but fortunately not many of either) can make real money off a changing neighborhood by encouraging people to "sell now before it's too late." Have a small, articulate committee call on real estate dealers operating in your neighborhood. Assume that they will be willing to co-operate unless you find evidence to the contrary. Be familiar with the real estate licensing code and report violations to the Commission (or its equivalent) and the board of realtors. Publicize the tactics of unethical and unscrupulous operators. Urge families that must sell to ask their realtor *not* to place a "For Sale" sign on their property. Present a united front.

• Guard neighborhood standards—the key to maintaining neighbor-

[2] From *Your Home in a Changing Neighborhood*, by the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations.

hood standards is not the exclusion of any family, but a determined, cooperative effort to keep these standards high. Watch closely for zoning violations, conversions to multiple dwellings, dilapidation, needed street repairs. Get copies of the housing, health, and building codes. Know the zoning law that applies to your neighborhood. Report any violations to the proper city commission if they are not voluntarily corrected. Start a planned improvement program to *raise* the standards higher than they were.

• Seek professional counsel and help—most large cities have a municipal agency created by law or executive order (Commission on Human Relations, Mayor's Committee), or at least voluntary agencies (Council of Churches Social Affairs Committee, Council of Social Agencies, etc.). They will usually have full-time staff persons trained especially in this field. *Don't depend solely upon good intentions, good will, and "common sense."* They are not always sufficient.

• If professional staff counsel is not locally available, write the Department of Social Education and Action, 830 Witherspoon Building, Philadelphia 7, Pa.

5. ***Implement by supporting supplementary efforts.*** Beyond localized neighborhood situations whose immediate need is stabilization are the larger efforts to solve the problems of discriminatory housing patterns:

• Urban renewal and redevelopment, which include slum clearance, the attraction of private industrial, commercial, and apartment construction, and the selection of sites for low- and middle-income public housing developments.

• Efforts to secure passage of municipal and state fair housing statutes, which make it unlawful to discriminate in the sale or rental of housing.

• Efforts to secure fair employment practices statutes (or strengthen those that already exist), which improve the economic position and buying power of minority people.

• Voluntary membership movements for equal rights.

Changes in the racial patterns of a neighborhood are not taking place in a hermetically sealed social unit. They are a part of a community, state, regional, national, and worldwide complex of forces that spell the end of that *form* of injustice that has race differences as its major ingredient. Responsible and informed support of those movements which are not inimical to Christian co-operation help hasten that end.

IN THE CLOSED COMMUNITY

—some things to try

EVEN if those who read these pages do nothing about it, today's closed community in the North and West will probably be day-after-tomorrow's racially changing community. The continuing nonwhite migration to the city, the building up of nonwhite housing pressure directed outward from the city, the rapid growth of a Negro middle class, and the already started growth of a Negro upper-income group—these and other economic factors make change inevitable. The question is not *whether* the closed community will open up, but *when* and how smoothly.

Two kinds of tasks need to be done by those who would work for residential desegregation in the suburbs, the exurbs, the large towns, the small cities, and the newer sections of the great cities. These tasks probably cannot be carried out by the same task group. But both need to be done and they supplement each other.

The one is broad, educational, reasonably uncontroversial, and designed to prepare comunities for the inevitable change. The other is sharply focused, direct-action oriented, highly controversial, and designed to hasten the inevitable change, perhaps even to induce it. Whereas most religious, business, and civic leaders will ordinarily be willing to identify themselves with the former effort, the latter may be regarded by some as radical or even unethical. Hence it almost necessarily involves a smaller number of people, few of whom are likely to have prestige or power in the community.

The Educational Task

Who is responsible for residential segregation in the closed community? In one sense a segregated residential pattern is a kind of "given." The white people who moved there didn't create it—it was there when they came. Until the first pioneering Negro family actually tries to buy a house there, no one has to *do* anything to maintain segregation—all that is required from anyone is that he *refrain* from doing anything to change it or challenge it. Then who is responsible for maintaining residential segregation (which, incidentally, helps maintain a "segregated" church)?

The answer is multiple. Briefly, however, segregated residential patterns are preserved by individual citizens, by institutional policies, and by that intangible but potent force which is commonly called "the climate of opinion." These all help:

1. Citizens who *want* to live in a community from which Negroes are excluded and do not hesitate to let this be known.

2. Citizens who don't care very much and therefore tolerate segregation without giving it much thought.

3. Citizens who *don't* want it, but from lack of conviction, time, energy, or knowledge of how to proceed do nothing to change it.

4. Unwritten but rigidly structured real estate and mortgage lending policies that both reflect and reinforce the attitudes of the citizens.

Item—Houses in "white areas" will not ordinarily be shown to a Negro buyer. If he asks to see them, he will be stalled or diverted to a "Negro area" or a "mixed" area. Many realtors will even refuse to show a house to a white buyer in a "mixed" or "Negro area."

Item—The Code of Ethics of the National Association of Real Estate Boards reads: "A realtor should never be instrumental in introducing into a neighborhood a character of property or use which will be detrimental to property values in that area." Up until 1950 the Code contained the phrase "members of any race or nationality or individuals whose presence will be detrimental to property values." In spite of innumerable studies that challenge this half-truth about property values, the implication of the Code is still accepted by most realtors. In order to qualify as a realtor (others are simply "real estate brokers") a real estate agent must accept this Code of Ethics, which contains many commendable principles designed to protect the interests of the client from unscrupulous operators.

Item—A homeowner who wanted to sell his property on the open market (if it existed) to any qualified buyer of any race could not list it, therefore, with a realtor (with almost unique exceptions) or most real estate agents. By doing so he would ensure its being shown and sold only to white clientele.

Item—With rare exceptions, builders of private housing developments believe that they dare not (and therefore *will* not) show or sell their houses to Negroes. Some builders, recognizing the great Negro housing pressure and the equal value of Negro dollars, build private housing developments for Negroes only. A few, like Morris Milgram of Philadelphia and Betty Jacob of Swarthmore, Pa., build "open occupancy" developments that do not discriminate either way.

Item—Many lending institutions either will not lend mortgage money to Negroes (or "open occupancy developments") at all, or else tack on an extra interest charge to offset the "greater risk" that such a loan is believed to entail.

Thus building, brokering, and lending institutions, which instruct and inform the buying public, both reflect and perpetuate the social climate, the economic structures, and the attitude patterns that maintain segregation. This institutional role is reinforced by every home buyer or seller who does not challenge it in some way.

A carefully planned and executed educational program can do some things. Other things it cannot do. It can:

1. Influence the prevailing climate of opinion so that overt public expressions of prejudice are socially unacceptable.

2. Create a general ferment of awareness and sensitivity where apathy and unconcern have prevailed.

3. Favorably modify to some ex-

tent the attitudes of those who are not deeply prejudiced or are uncommitted.

4. Encourage and support those who are already committed to fair play and equality of opportunity.

5. Crystallize or awaken the negative attitudes of those who are already committed to segregation.

6. Lessen the shock of the first "break" in the segregated residential pattern, drive the opposition "underground," and encourage the public support of respectable and responsible elements.

7. Stimulate public statements of nondiscriminatory policy from churches and service institutions in the community.

An educational program alone, however, has severe limitations. It probably cannot *by itself:*

1. Bring about real change in the long-standing institutional policies of economic enterprises that depend upon public support and good will for their continued profitable operation.

2. Bring about the sale of a single house to a Negro family.

3. Make any actual change in the pattern of residential segregation.

However, the conduct of a continuous program of public relations and education is an essential part of the twofold task that needs to be accomplished before the closed community can become an open community without shock, dislocation, or possible violence.

How does such an educational program get started? Four steps are needed: organization, orientation, planning, execution. This will not "just happen" unless someone makes it happen. Usually a group of two to five persons who care must discover each other and take the initiative. Each one will probably know one or two others who can be brought into the group, and this forms the nucleus around which the organization is built. A local church social education and action committee could well be such a catalytic agent. However, it should take care not to give the impression that it is simply extending a "Presbyterian program" out into a community program.

Organization

1. The nuclear group should form a brief statement of purpose, one with which no reasonable civic leader could disagree. Example: "To create and promote mutual understanding and good will among racial and religious groups in our community to the end that we may all live together in peace with justice."

2. The group should be enlarged by inviting religious, business, professional, political, and civic leaders to join it on the basis of its stated purpose. These must include Negro leaders or it will be off on the wrong foot at the start. Those most likely to be interested should be asked first, and their consent be used to encourage others less likely to be the first to respond.

3. If possible, a news release should be prepared announcing the formal organization of the group, its election of officers, its purpose, its name, prominent people in it, etc.

4. Participation by organizations should be sought, e.g., civic associations, service clubs, etc.

Orientation

1. The motivation, experience, and degree of commitment of the members of the group will be very diverse. Several meetings will be needed for them to get acquainted and learn some of the "facts of life" that the group itself will later seek to publish in the community.

2. Films, luncheon speakers, panels, etc., to help the group understand its own goals and methods can be used for the first two or three meetings. Perhaps a similar group in a nearby community exists and can share its experience through a speaker. Suburban groups, however, are likely to be suspicious of "outsiders," especially if they come from the city or seem to be trying to "convert" the group.

3. Early involvement in planning projects is important. Care should be taken to ensure that members of both races participate in this planning. This itself is an essential part of the group's orientation.

Planning

1. First projects carried out should be relatively noncontroversial (examples: a concert by an interracial chorus; a tea or reception —some reason can be found—to which both the Negro and white communities are invited), highly publicized both before and after, and have modest goals like good fellowship or entertainment.

2. Later projects may be more probing and challenging (examples: research and publication of facts about employment opportunities, public accommodations, health services, and—sooner or later—housing opportunities available in the community for minority people).

3. Some kind of public commitment to the principle of equality or open occupancy may be sought after the group has established itself. (For example, a group in West Hartford, Connecticut, was able to buy a full-page ad in the local paper, listing over 1,200 names and addresses of persons who placed themselves publicly on record as being willing to "welcome new neighbors of good character without regard to their race, religion, or national origin." Several other communities in the North and West have done this—write the Department of Social Education and Action, 830 Witherspoon Building, Philadelphia 7, Pa., for photostatic copies of such an advertisement.)

Execution

Committees, interracial as far as possible, should be assigned responsibility on a "division of labor" basis to carry out plans made by the group. Suggested committees: executive or steering committee, program committee, publicity committee, promotion committee, membership committee, incident committee (to investigate and recommend action to deal with rumors and "incidents"). As the group becomes firmly established and its members are better oriented, it may find it possible to negotiate improvements in several peripheral areas of racial policy and practice (examples: elimination of race labeling in newspaper articles and want ads, securing employment opportunities for qualified Negroes in local stores, offices, or industries, securing equal treatment in public

accommodations such as restaurants, hospitals, nursing homes, etc.).

Warning

Unlike the group operating in the changing neighborhood, the group in the closed community would be wise *not* to direct its efforts immediately to the "grass roots," i.e., in block or neighborhood meetings. Ordinarily most white homeowners not confronted with the actual prospect of a new Negro neighbor do not want, and will strongly resist, discussions having even remote implications for their *own* block or neighborhood. Such discussions conceived as "educational" or "preparatory" measures are likely to do more harm than good. The educational task in the closed community is directed to the community leaders, to the community at large, and to natural-interest groupings of a less intimate character like the P.T.A. or service clubs. Its efforts, to be really fruitful in desegregating residential patterns, must be supplemented by those of another task force of a more controversial nature.

The Action Task Group

In most metropolitan areas there already exist social *forces* working for the eventual development of new arrangements in private housing. In most closed communities there are a few *individuals* and occasionally an organization or two that desire democratic arrangements to work out. The idea of the action task force is to bring these individuals together at the local scene for the purpose of using and guiding these forces purposefully, rather than to permit things to "work themselves out" haphazardly. In a word, the action task group *perceives its role as an agent of change rather than as a spectator or victim of change.*

Dr. Alfred S. Kramer of the National Council of Churches' Department of Racial and Cultural Relations has been in direct consultative touch with such groups in six cities, ranging in size from 20,000 to 2,000,000 population. Although the groups themselves and the communities they work in are widely diverse, Kramer recognizes six characteristics common to all these groups (see September-October, 1958, issue of *Interracial News Service*, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.):

1. The group is made up of individuals committed to the goal of achieving justice, specifically in housing.
2. They believe and *expect* that this can be done.
3. They believe that this can be at least partially achieved in their community in the relatively near future, i.e., their concept of their task has a *time dimension.*
4. They *perceive means,* or lines of action, leading toward the achievement of this expectation.
5. They *demonstrate* their convictions, their role perception, and their capability by planning strategy for constructive racial change in their communities.
6. They *expect conflict* as a normal concomitant of social change, and accept the calculated risk of trying to make it creative.

These groups have a threefold function:

Analysis—research and gathering of data on the private housing market: available nondiscriminatory sellers, economically and psychologically qualified buyers, co-operating real estate brokers, possible sources of mortgage funds, community organization resources, etc.

Communication—getting buyer and seller together.

Counseling as to timing and planning of the steps leading up to the actual move. Some groups also regard follow-up as a necessary part of counseling after the move takes place, i.e., locating and mobilizing positive forces and committed neighbors in the immediate vicinity to ease the impact of the change. For example, many local citizens—clergymen, Christians, Jews—and some local agencies—a League of Women Voters, a chamber of commerce, a church session—while they would never participate in an effort to *induce* racial change, are willing to support order and co-operation after change has taken place.

Community situations vary too widely and the wisdom of experience is too meager to permit step-by-step, detailed counsel on *how* such a task group gets organized and proceeds to do its work. Three working principles seem to be quite clearly established, however. A fourth is still being debated. All three are in contrast with the working principle of the educational or preparatory task group.

First, the group's conceptual understanding of its role as an agent of change is crucial.

Secondly, its procedure is characterized by efforts to *locate,* not necessarily to *create,* co-operators and allies.

Thirdly, it ought not to *seek,* and should not *expect,* public understanding or support.

Fourthly, its goals, plans, procedures, perhaps even its existence, will be seriously jeopardized if they are widely known outside the group itself.

Because experience is so meager with reference to how a direct-action group can effectively open up house-buying opportunities in the closed community, it would seem best to suggest procedural methods by implication from illustrative incidents, rather than by detailed instructions. The following indicate both the problems that should be anticipated and the possibility of solution.

Item—In a Philadelphia suburb a Veterans Administration mortgage foreclosure was listed for resale with several real estate brokers operating in that area. One of them was a stock corporation financed by religious people of many faiths specifically for the purpose of showing and brokering property on a nondiscriminatory basis. Its real estate agent showed the house to both Negro and white clients. The next day a local realtor went to the Veterans Administration, bid $200 more than was being asked for the house, made a deposit on it, and engineered a meeting of neighbors living near the house. At that meeting, the purchase price was subscribed by neighbors. The next day, committees of residents cleaned up the house, trimmed its shrubbery, mowed the lawn. It is

presently for sale to white buyers only. Citation of similar incidents could be multiplied. **Conclusion:** If white residents realize a nearby house *may be* sold to Negroes, they often move quickly with the co-operation of a realtor to buy it "out from under" any prospective Negro buyer and restore it to the closed white market.

Item—A committee from a Unitarian church in the Pittsburgh area, concerned about opening up private housing opportunities in a newer section of that city, called upon an owner whose house was for sale. They urged him to offer it on a nondiscriminatory basis. He at first refused, but was finally persuaded to do so, *if* his neighbors "did not object." They did, and efforts to persuade them otherwise on moral and economic grounds failed. The house remained on the restricted market, and was sold to a white buyer. Similar instances in numerous Northern cities could be cited. **Conclusions:** (*a*) Efforts to persuade an individual seller to offer his house on a racially open market in a community that is generally regarded as "white," usually find that individual extremely sensitive to how his neighbors feel. (*b*) Efforts to persuade individual white residents ahead of time and on a one-by-one approach to accept Negro neighbors whom they have never met, about whom they are likely to have unrealistic fears and assumptions, and whose entrance into the neighborhood is generally thought of as "bad," probably will not succeed very often.

Item—(*a*) A white realtor in a West Coast city sold a house in a white neighborhood to a Negro family and was expelled from the local board of realtors on a technicality. (*b*) A white family in a Middle Western city informed their realtor that they desired him to show and sell their house to any person who came to him with requisite financial resources, regardless of that person's race, etc. The realtor became very upset, said he could not do so. The family insisted. The issue was not resolved, but on the next weekend a steady stream of white clients, guided by several realtors, looked at the house, and it was sold to one of them shortly thereafter. (*c*) In another section of the same metropolitan area a white realtor sold a house to a Negro family in a white neighborhood, then personally went to all the neighbors, informed them that the new residents were decent, respectable, intelligent people—and Negroes—and that it was their responsibility as good neighbors to welcome them. The new family moved in uneventfully. **Conclusions:** Not all closed communities are the same; not all realtors are the same; people *may* react positively rather than negatively when confronted with an accomplished fact (then again, under other circumstances, they may not—as in Levittown, Pa.).

Item—A Quaker family in an old and elite Eastern suburb decided to sell their house on a nondiscriminatory basis. They discovered that their neighbors, when they learned of this decision, were highly disturbed. The Quaker family distributed the following letter:

Statement of Yarrows on Sale of Their House

My wife and I would like to sell our house on a nondiscriminatory basis. We have taken seriously the words of a writer in an article on "A Religious Approach to Discrimination":

> *"If I believe that all people are children of one God, if I believe that I should do unto others what I would have others do unto me, if I believe that discrimination is wrong, then I shall try not to be a party to discrimination."*

Several years ago this article was printed up as a Declaration of Intentions and signed by some 800 persons in the Philadelphia area. One of us was among the signers. For us it was a hope rather than an actuality, since we knew that we participated in discrimination at a number of points, and especially in the housing that we occupied. We felt that we could live with this as long as we worked for better solutions and as long as we tried to free ourselves from discrimination whenever a chance arose.

In selling our house the Yarrows wish to give an opportunity to a family who would not otherwise have the advantage of living in the community of Swarthmore with its excellent schools, good community facilities, and college atmosphere. Such opportunities are greatly restricted at the present time for minority groups and particularly Negro families. We would like to sell to a family who would fully appreciate the opportunity which this community affords. If such a family does not show interest in the house within a reasonable time, we will be glad to entertain offers from other individuals who want to live in the house. In order to sell our house in this manner we have listed the house with the Friends Suburban Housing, Inc., whose policy statement is available for all who desire it.

We are not unmindful of the storm and stress that this proposed action of ours causes to some of our neighbors. We must acknowledge that we are leaving Swarthmore and will not be around to undergo the consequences. We feel, however, that the dire predictions of loss in real estate values and deterioration of the neighborhood are based on fears rather than on careful analysis.

We have given serious thought and study to the problems that might result from such a sale. There are very few comparable situations to consider, but where there are, they give ample reassurance on several scores. There is no real reason for any loss in property values by the persons living in our neighborhood because of this action. Perhaps we have more faith in the good sense of Swarthmore residents than others. We doubt if anyone is going to think that the strong advantages of living in this town are going to be immediately lost because one or two fine families of darker skin move into areas which have previously been closed to them. We have met many persons in the last few years who would be a great asset to this community: judges, physicians, professors, church workers, just people.

To our neighbors, as we talk to

them, we must say: "Yes, we are sensitive to your needs and worries, but we have to be sensitive to the needs and desires of the individuals who have suffered unjust restrictions over these many years, and who right now cannot freely look for housing on the same basis that we do. They too are our neighbors."

Clarence H. Yarrow
Margaret N. Yarrow
June 27, 1958

The letter did not convince the neighbors, but it thrust upon their attention the ethical concern of one couple and forced them to look at their own community in a new light. The house was sold, after three or four weeks, to a white buyer. The Negro families who looked at it turned it down. **Conclusion:** Selling a house on "the open market" doesn't necessarily mean it will be bought by Negroes. It means that the Negro buyer, not the white neighbors, makes the decision as to whether he will buy or not.

SUMMARY

THE changing neighborhood and the closed community present different problems, require different approaches to their solutions. The needs of the closed community probably must met by two different groups—an educational and a direct-action group. The comparative characteristics of three different approaches are suggested in the three columns below.

In Changing Neighborhood	In Closed Community	
Educational and Action	*Educational*	*Action*
I. What type of group can work most effectively?		
Neighborhood council or block club of immediate residents.	Prestige persons, organizational and church representatives, interested individuals.	Committed individuals.
II. What are the perceived goals of the group?		
To stabilize neighborhood, stem panic selling, enlist residents in maintaining high neighborhood standards.	To change climate of opinion, create general awareness of racial situation, involve community leaders, reduce prejudice.	To change the pattern of residential segregation, to "open" the closed community, to induce or facilitate racial change.
III. What methods does the group use?		
Neighborhood or block meetings, conferences with city officials (e.g., zoning board, police dept., public health dept.), negotiations with real estate brokers, mimeographed bulletins.	Education through public programs, mass media; publicity, persuasion, and exhortation.	Direct action by locating allies and working with them.

IV. What techniques characterize these methods?

Distribute literature, get commitments not to sell in panic, seek court injunctions to require city officials to enforce laws and regulations, report unscrupulous real estate practices to board of realtors.

Research and publish facts; release newspaper stories; use films and panels before P.T.A. and service clubs; seek intergroup relations courses in school curriculum; sponsor observances of "brotherhood affairs" in churches and community; seek commitment in covenants of open occupancy.

Find sellers who will show house on nondiscriminatory basis, find Negro families with financial, cultural, and psychological resources to buy in white community; quietly try to locate real estate broker who will not discriminate; perhaps bring buyer and seller together directly; plan an "open occupancy" housing project.

V. What are illustrative examples of these techniques?

A group of neighbors displayed signs: "This House NOT for Sale—We Like It Here"; another stopped the subdividing of houses into several apartments by getting zoning ordinance enforced; another sponsored bimonthly neighborhood "street picnics" to get neighbors acquainted.

A New Jersey church secured signed commitments of a third of its members to a "covenant of open occupancy"; 1,500 citizens of Palo Alto, Calif., published their names in a full-page newspaper ad stating their "readiness to welcome new neighbors of whatever race, color, or national origin"; a Human Relations Council in a Pennsylvania town persuaded merchants to hire Negro salespersons.

A private builder built and sold 140 houses to Negro and white families in an "open occupancy" development in Bucks County, Pa. —has started two other similar developments; a small licensed real estate firm, financed by religious people, has sold nearly 20 houses to Negroes in previously all-white Philadelphia suburbs; small groups in six communities from coast to coast have helped initiate sales, and settled nonwhite families in previously all-white neighborhoods—sometimes with, sometimes without realtor (40 families in one West Coast city of 200,000).

VI. What cautions should these groups observe?

Don't wait until it's too late and panic has taken over—organize when first Negro family moves in. Include that family in initial meeting. Seek professional guidance.

Start with interested individuals, but don't limit the group to them. Unless community leaders are involved, whether initially sympathetic or not, you will never make a dent in the social climate. Seek professional guidance.

Don't seek popular support; seek allies. Be prepared to take villification and misunderstanding of motives, perhaps economic and social reprisals. Seek professional guidance.

RESOURCES

— *where to get help*

1. For counsel and guidance from a professionally trained intergroup relations staff person, call, write, or go to:

(*a*) Your nearest tax-supported city or state agency—the Commission on Human Relations, Mayor's Committee, or their equivalent.

(*b*) Your nearest private agency—local, state, or regional office of the Urban League, Anti-Defamation League, Jewish Community Relations Council, American Friends Service Committee, Council of Churches' Social Action Department. If in doubt, write to National Association of Intergroup Relations Officials for name and address of a member nearest you.

2. For films, call or write:

(*a*) Your metropolitan library.

(*b*) Your nearest tax-supported or private agency as mentioned above. Regional offices of the Anti-Defamation League usually have many films to choose from, and charge only a nominal rental.

3. For literature on housing, property values, etc., write The National Committee Against Discrimination in Housing.

4. For counsel and possible financial assistance for development of open-occupancy housing projects, write Modern Community Developers.

5. For nearest location of two excellent films (*All the Way Home* and *Crisis in Levittown, Pa.*) write Dynamic Films, Inc.

6. To find nearest regional, state, or local office write the national office of one or more of these:

National Committee Against Discrimination in Housing, 35 West 32d Street, New York 1, N. Y.; National Urban League, 14 East 48th Street, New York 17, N. Y.; American Friends Service Committee, 20 South 12th Street, Philadelphia 7, Pa.; NCC Department of Racial and Cultural Relations, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.; Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, 515 Madison Avenue, New York 22, N. Y.; Modern Community Developers, Inc., 84 Nassau Street, Princeton, N. J.; National Community Relations Advisory Council, 9 East 38th Street, New York 16, N. Y.; National Association of Intergroup Relations Officials, 152 West 42d Street, Room 1508, New York 36, N. Y.; Department of Social Education and Action, 830 Witherspoon Building, Philadelphia 7, Pa.

RACIAL INTEGRATION IN THE CHURCHES

In accordance with the directive of the 169th General Assembly (1957), the Department of Social Education and Action has gathered data to help "discover the extent to which racial integration has been achieved" in particular congregations in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.[1] A total of 6,571 questionnaires were sent out, of which 4,766 were returned—a response of 72 per cent. Although tabulation and interpretation of the data thus obtained has not been fully completed, significant findings can be reported at this time, along with some tentative conclusions.

Interpreting the Survey

INITIALLY the most striking feature of the survey is the level of response. Mail-type questionnaires are not ordinarily expected to yield higher than a 10 per cent to 50 per cent return. A 72 per cent response can be regarded as extraordinarily high, if not unique. This must be attributed in part at least to the widespread and deep concern among Presbyterian pastors (who were the respondents) for the whole problem of racial segregation, particularly in the church.

It should be emphasized that the survey is statistical and therefore has limited value for producing anything but provisional judgments about the church's spiritual health or the attitudes of its members. It deals with numbers, whereas the church's immediate concern is with persons and the quality of their relationships to God and each other. The survey does, however, give a fairly accurate pastors' view of the racial characteristics of the church's institutional life in local congregations.

It should also be noted that the survey instrument focused upon Negro-white relations, and did not give attention to the integration of nonwhite Christians other than Negro. This narrowing of focus seemed wise and necessary because of the fact that the Negro-white relationship is for the church, as for American society, critical in nearly all regions of the United States. The white church that can receive a Negro Christian into its membership will almost surely be able to receive an Oriental or an Indian Christian also,

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1 "The 169th General Assembly directs the Department of Social Education and Action to undertake suitable studies and surveys to discover the extent to which racial integration has been achieved in the church and in its agencies and institutions, to develop a comprehensive, effective, unified program for the whole church to achieve a nonsegregated church and a nonsegregated society, and to report to the next General Assembly." The survey did not include churches of the United Presbyterian Church of North America or pastorless churches.

regardless of where the church is located in this country. The reverse would not necessarily be true. When the church solves its Negro-white "problem," its "racial problem" will also be solved.

However, the solution to this problem—the achieving of a nonsegregated church and a nonsegregated society—does not lie only on the shoulders of white Christians or white churches, as will be indicated later. The contributions of Negro Christians and white Christians to its solution are of a different order because, with significant exceptions, the former tend to be the excluded and the latter tend to be the excluders. Further, where there may be a willingness on "both sides" to achieve an open fellowship in the church, the patterns of society and decades of uncritical acceptance of these patterns by a majority of both groups tend to militate against any real changes in the *status quo*.

Terminology

Even to discuss the highly diversified patterns of relationship in our churches and their communities necessitates some mutually, if temporarily, acceptable terminology.

Solely for the purposes of this report, the following terms will be used as here defined:

1. White church—any church that is either predominantly or completely Caucasian in its constituency.
2. Negro church—any church that is either all-Negro or predominantly Negro in its constituency.
3. All-white church—a church whose membership is predominantly Caucasian and which has no Negroes present either on its membership roll or participating regularly in its life or worship.
4. All-Negro church—a church whose membership is predominantly Negro and which has no Caucasians on its membership roll or participating regularly in its life or worship.
5. Desegregated white church—a predominantly Caucasian church with one or more Negroes in its membership, life, or worship.
6. Desegregated Negro church—a predominantly Negro church with one or more Caucasians in its membership, life, or worship.
7. Inclusive white church—a predominantly Caucasian church having at least two Negroes on its membership roll and/or at least six Negroes in church on a typical Sunday morning.
8. Inclusive Negro church—a predominantly Negro church having at least two Caucasians on its membership roll and/or at least six in church on a typical Sunday morning.

The Data

Of the 4,766 responding churches, 3,964 were all-white in membership and participation, 609 were desegregated white with one or more Negroes

in membership or participation, 81 were all-Negro, and 38 were desegregated Negro (see Table I).

Table I
Constituency of Responding Churches

All-white constituency	3,964
Desegregated white, at least one Negro	609
All-Negro constituency	81
Desegregated Negro, at least one white	38
Oriental, Indian, or "other" churches	57
Unclassifiable or spoiled returns	17
TOTAL No. Responding Churches	4,766

Some Characteristics of White Churches

The 3,964 all-white churches constitute an important group for study. Strictly speaking, they might be called "segregated." Yet 2,870 are located in neighborhoods or communities where not a single Negro is reported living within one-half mile of their door. Another 701 churches have a negligible less-than-one-per-cent Negro population living within a half mile. This means that 3,571 of these "segregated" churches are located in "segregated" parishes, and under the prevailing American practice of joining a "neighborhood church" can do little more than reflect in their membership the color characteristics of their community. They are doomed to remain "segregated churches in a segregated society" until they, or other forces, desegregate their residential communities.

On the other hand, the 609 white churches that have at least one Negro present, while varying widely from each other, also constitute a significant group for study. Strangely enough, 376 of these "desegregated" churches are located in parishes whose Negro population is from zero to less than one per cent, indicating that many of them draw Negro members from beyond the half-mile radius. Tables II, III, and IV indicate the correlation of Negroes-in-the-parish with Negroes-in-the-church for all-white and predominantly white churches.

Table II
Parish Residential Patterns of the 4,573 White Churches

White churches that—	No. Churches	% of 4,573
Have no Negroes within one-half mile	2,989	65.36
Have less than 1% Negroes within one-half mile	958	20.95
Have 1% to 10% Negroes within one-half mile	417	9.12
Have 11% to 30% Negroes within one-half mile	134	2.93
Have 31% to 50% Negroes within one-half mile	55	1.20
Have over 50% Negroes within one-half mile	19	.42
Did not indicate	1	.02
TOTAL	4,573	100.00

Table III

Parish Residential Patterns of the 3,964 All-white Churches

All-white churches that—	No. Churches	% of 3,964
Have no Negroes within one-half mile	2,870	72.40
Have less than 1% Negroes within one-half mile	701	17.68
Have 1% to 10% Negroes within one-half mile	276	6.96
Have 11% to 30% Negroes within one-half mile	78	1.97
Have 31% to 50% Negroes within one-half mile	30	.76
Have more than 50% Negroes within one-half mile	9	.23
TOTAL	3,964	100.00

Table IV

Parish Residential Patterns of the 609 Desegregated White Churches

Desegregated white churches that—	No. Churches	% of 609
Have no Negroes within one-half mile	119	19.54
Have less than 1% Negroes within one-half mile	257	42.20
Have 1% to 10% Negroes within one-half mile	141	23.15
Have 11% to 30% Negroes within one-half mile	56	9.20
Have 31% to 50% Negroes within one-half mile	25	4.11
Have over 50% Negroes within one-half mile	10	1.64
Did not indicate	1	.16
TOTAL	609	100.00

Table V supplies more significant aspects of the desegregation picture, however. It indicates the percentage of white Presbyterian churches that, having theoretically the opportunity to desegregate, have not yet found it possible to take that first, visible step toward *de facto* desegregation—that is, the churches that remain "segregated" even though located within a "desegregated" parish.

Table V

Distribution of White Churches by Negro Population

White churches that have—	Total No. of Churches	No. of Desegregated Churches	% of Desegregated Churches	% of "Segregated" Churches
No Negroes within one-half mile	2,989	119	3.98	96.02
Less than 1% Negroes within one-half mile	958	257	26.87	73.13
1% to 10% Negroes within one-half mile	417	141	33.81	66.19
11% to 30% Negroes within one-half mile	134	56	41.79	58.21
31% to 50% Negroes within one-half mile	55	25	45.45	54.55
Over 50% Negroes within one-half mile	19	10	52.63	47.37
Not indicated	1	1	—	—
TOTAL	4,573	609	—	—

What Table V seems to say is that the more white Presbyterian churches there are that have Negroes living nearby, the more "desegregated" Presbyterian churches will be achieved. The percentage of white churches actually having at least one Negro present in membership or attendance rises sharply as the Negro population within the parish rises. This is to be expected.

A still more significant group of churches to study consists of those 309 (slightly over half of the 609) that have at least two Negro members and/or at least six Negroes in church on a typical Sunday morning. These 309 churches have gone beyond the "token desegregation" stage that admits one Negro (who may be the janitor), and sometimes remains static. Table VI indicates the distribution of these 309 "inclusive" churches according to percentage of Negro population in the geographical vicinity of the church.

Table VI

Distribution of Inclusive White Churches by Negro Population

White churches that have—	Total No. Churches	No. of Inclusive Churches	% of Inclusive Churches
No Negroes within one-half mile	2,989	52	1.74
Less than 1% Negroes within one-half mile	958	118	12.32
1% to 10% Negroes within one-half mile	417	85	20.38
11% to 30% Negroes within one-half mile	134	35	26.12
31% to 50% Negroes within one-half mile	55	11	20.00
Over 50% Negroes within one-half mile	19	7	36.84
Not indicated	1	1	—
TOTAL	4,573	309	—

Distribution by Type of Parish

These same groups of churches (all-white, desegregated, and inclusive) can also be classified as to type of parish—urban, suburban, rural, town.[2] If this is done, and the correlation of Negroes-in-the-parish with Negroes-in-the-church is made, it is seen that of the 1,211 responding urban churches of both races, 273 or 22.54 per cent are desegregated white churches and 151 of these, or 12.47 per cent, are inclusive white churches. At the same time 470 of the 1,211 are white churches that have no Negroes living within one-half mile of their doors, and another 225 have a parish Negro population of less than 1 per cent. This means that 695 white urban churches out of 1,211 (57.39 per cent) are still located in virtually "segregated" white neighborhoods.

Of the 665 responding suburban churches of both races, 80 or 12.03 per cent are desegregated white churches and 38 of these, or 5.71 per cent,

[2] These categories are derived by combining eight classifications from the questionnaire: Urban residential, urban commercial, urban industrial, urban downtown, suburban, small town, large town.

are inclusive white churches. At the same time, 472 of the 665 are white churches that have no Negroes within one-half mile of their doors, and another 83 have a parish Negro population of less than 1 per cent. This means that 555 white suburban churches out of 665 (83.46 per cent) are still located in virtually "segregated" white neighborhoods.

Of the 907 responding rural churches of both races, 40 or 4.41 per cent are desegregated white churches and 24 of these, or 2.65 per cent, are inclusive white churches. However, 732 of the 907 are white and have no Negroes living nearby, and another 59 white rural churches have a parish Negro population of less than 1 per cent. This means that 791 out of 907 (87.21 per cent) are white churches located in rural areas with virtually no Negro population from which to draw church members.

A "town" church was defined for purposes of the survey as one situated in an incorporated municipality of under 10.000 population (small town) or of from 10,000 to 35,000 (large town). These two categories constituted 1,980 of the responding churches of both races. Of these, 216 or 10.91 per cent were classified as desegregated white churches and 96 of these, or 4.85 per cent, were classified as inclusive white churches. At the same time, 1,194 of the 1,980 are white churches that have no Negroes within one-half mile of their doors and another 334 white rural churches have a parish Negro population of less than 1 per cent. In other words, 1.528 out of 1,980 churches (77.17 per cent) are located in "segregated" white parishes.

Table VII tabulates this correlation between church desegregation and parish desegregation according to type of parish.

Table VII

Correlation of Church and Parish Desegregation by Type of Parish

Type of Parish	Total No. of Churches	No. of Desegregated White Churches	% of Desegregated White Churches	No. of Inclusive White Churches	% of Inclusive White Churches	No. of White Churches Located in "Segregated" Parish	% of White Churches Located in "Segregated" Parish
Urban	1,211	273	22.54	151	12.47	695	57.39
Suburban	665	80	12.03	38	5.71	555	83.46
Rural	907	40	4.41	24	2.65	791	87.21
Town	1,980	216	10.91	96	4.85	1,528	77.17
TOTAL	4,763	609	—	309	—	3,569	—

Distribution by Socio-geographical Climate

The socio-geographical distribution of the responding churches also contributes helpful information. An effort was made to categorize the 48 states

in terms of their prevailing "climate of opinion" with respect to Negro-white relations This effort was, of course, arbitrary and relative. It necessitated the consideration and balancing of many incommensurable factors such as the density of Negro population, the existence of enforceable state statutes making racial discrimination unlawful, the general level of achievement of racial equality in employment, education, public accommodations, etc., the quality of public statements of prominent figures on the subject, and the massiveness of resistance to the Supreme Court decision on public-school segregation. Even if all these factors could be accurately assessed, such categorization by states would still be speculative because of wide variations within states in almost all categories. With all these qualifying factors considered, six categories were nevertheless devised as follows:

Group 1—States with "favorable climate" predominating: Connecticut, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania.

Group 2—States with "mixed favorable climate": California, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Oregon, Rhode Island, Washington.

Group 3—States with "no problem":[3] Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont, Wisconsin, Wyoming.

Group 4—Border states: Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Oklahoma, West Virginia, Kansas, Missouri.

Group 5—"Resisting" states: Arkansas, Florida, Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia.[4]

Group 6—"Defiant" states: Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, East Texas,[5] South Carolina.

Table VIII indicates the distribution of white, Negro, desegregated, and inclusive white responses according to socio-geographical groupings. The key columns in Table VIII are columns 11 and 13, which give the percentage of desegregated and inclusive churches in each grouping. The table clearly suggests that churches tend in their membership to reflect the social climate of their region even as they also tend to reflect the residential pattern of their immediate geographical parish.

This indication is supplemented by the replies to a question that asked the pastor to check the three factors that contributed most to the racial integration of his church (if he regarded it as racially integrated) or the three most serious obstacles to its becoming integrated (if he regarded it as not integrated). In both instances the local or regional "climate of opinion" rated high on the list of critical factors, whether regarded as favorable and thus assisting integration or unfavorable and hindering it.

[3] The "no problem" phrase is used as a reflection of the fairly typical comments from pastors in states that have three characteristics: (*a*) a relatively tiny Negro population, (*b*) a minimum of overt racial tension, (*c*) a fairly static pattern of race relations. This pattern often includes discrimination that goes unchallenged and therefore is not obvious.

[4] At the time these classifications were made, Virginia had not clearly moved into the "defiant" group.

[5] East Texas is, of course, not a state. But because it is both geographically and sociologically similar to the states in Group 6, it was placed there.

Table VIII

Socio-geographical Distribution of Response by State Grouping

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
GROUP	Total Questionnaires Sent Out	Total Responses	% Responses	No. of White Churches Responding	No. of Negro Churches Responding	No. of "Other" Churches Responding	No. of All-White Responses	% All-White Responses (Cols. 5, 8)	No. of Desegregated White Responses	% of Desegregated White Responses (Cols. 5, 10)	No. of Inclusive White Responses	% of Inclusive White Responses
1	2,152	1,646	76.49%	1,616	29	1	1,289	79.76%	328	20.30%	178	11.01%
2	1,778	1,349	75.87%	1,320	9	20	1,151	87.20%	171	12.95%	83	6.29%
3	1,225	889	72.57%	864	2	23	796	92.13%	75	8.68%	36	4.17%
4	668	494	73.95%	468	14	12	441	94.23%	27	5.77%	11	2.35%
5	534	320	59.93%	263	57	0	259	98.48%	3	1.14%	0	0.00%
6	214	58	27.10%	44	14	0	44	100.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
TOTAL	6,571	4,756*	—	4,575	125	56	3,980	—	604	—	308	—

* Responses from Alaska (10) not tabulated

Pastors' Appraisal of Church "Openness"

One further tabulation that is less helpful in understanding the situations of our churches can be reported at this time. The survey indicated that a high proportion of the responding churches have a stated session policy of "openness." That is to say, the sessions of 2,301 of the respondents were on record to the effect that they would receive any applicant for membership solely on the basis of his profession of faith, without regard to his race or color. A still higher proportion of the responding pastors checked their belief that a member of "the other race" would be received by the session on the same basis. Tables IX and X indicate the extent of these responses.

Table IX
Stated Policy of "Openness" in All Responding Churches
Does session have stated open policy?

Yes	No	Don't Know
2,301	1,987	476

Table X
Pastors' Appraisal of "Openness" in All Responding Churches
Do you believe session would receive member of "the other race"?

Yes	Probably	Don't Know	Probably Not	No
2,989	1,067	340	261	105

Again, the socio-geographical distribution of these responses indicates the degree to which the session's stated policy and the pastor's anticipation may be influenced by the "social climate" in which the church is situated. Table XI shows this distribution among the responding all-white churches.

Table XI
Socio-geographical Distribution of Policy and Appraisal *

Socio-geographical Group (See p. 33)	No. of All-White Churches	No. with Session Policy	% with Session Policy	No. That Would Receive Negroes	No. That Would "Probably" Receive Negroes	% That Would or "Probably" Would Receive Negroes
Group 1	1,289	606	47.01	829	315	88.75
Group 2	1,151	533	46.31	684	291	84.71
Group 3	796	311	39.07	528	199	91.33
Group 4	441	192	43.54	193	135	74.38
Group 5	259	59	22.78	51	67	45.56
Group 6	44	1	2.27	0	5	11.36
TOTAL	3,980	1,702	—	2,285	1,012	—

* This table includes *only* all-white churches. Neither desegregated or inclusive white churches nor Negro churches are included.

Table XI should be interpreted with considerable caution, however. The relationship between a stated policy of "openness" to an actual movement toward *de facto* desegregation on the part of a church is not clearly understood. The existence of such a policy is much more likely to be permissive than causative of desegregation. But it cannot even be permissive if no Negroes are at hand to be "integrated." Hence the existence of such a policy in a church located in an all-white residential community is relatively insignificant as compared to the existence of such a policy in a church located in a racially mixed community or in the deep South.

A similar judgment can probably be made about a pastor's estimate of his session's degree of receptivity toward Negroes. If it is granted that prejudice in varying degrees of intensity exists in 80 per cent of the white population (as Kenneth Clark asserts[6]), but its overt expression is socially unacceptable, then it would not be unusual to attribute a willingness to receive Negroes to a session that could hardly expect to be called upon to do so in the foreseeable future, because no Negroes are around. This ascription of "openness," or a session's actually having such a policy, remains academic rather than existential until the real possibility of being called upon to "act it out" exists or seems to exist, as in the racially mixed community or in the South.

Much more study must be carried out before stated policies and subjective appraisals of anticipated reaction to imaginary situations can be fully understood in the context of the church's racial practices. However, such policies and estimates are useful and indicative of some degree of awareness. Graphs A and B below seek to portray their relationship to each other and to *de facto* desegregation in the churches of each socio-geographical grouping.

In Graph A, the top curve or solid line represents the percentage of white churches in each grouping whose session are actually on record as being "open." It will be seen that in both cases the curve is relatively flat for Groups 1 through 4, in spite of the fact that the "climate of opinion" in these states is believed to vary considerably. The fact that the percentage of pastors' estimates of openness for churches in Group 3 (the "no problem" churches) is higher than in Group 1 (the "favorable climate" churches), while the percentage of sessions with open policies is lower for Group 3 than for Group 1, seems significant. It suggests that there may be a greater need for actual commitment on the part of sessions in "no problem" areas than the pastors' estimates indicate.

Graph B, portraying the percentages of *de facto* desegregation and inclusiveness for each group, presents a much less ambivalent picture. It suggests that clarity of witness results more from behavior than from policy or belief, but that behavior seems to be sharply conditioned by community patterns and climate of opinion.

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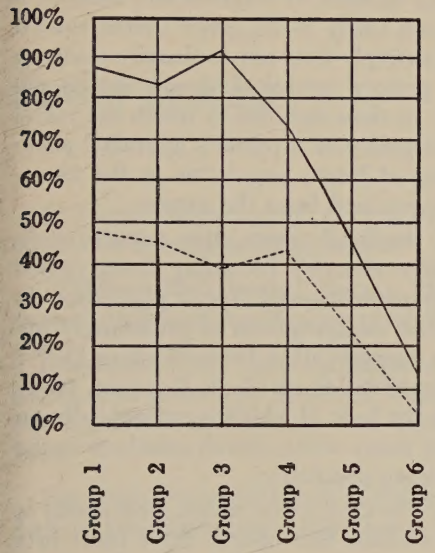
[6] *Prejudice and Your Child*, pp. 71 ff.—attributed to Allport and Kramer.

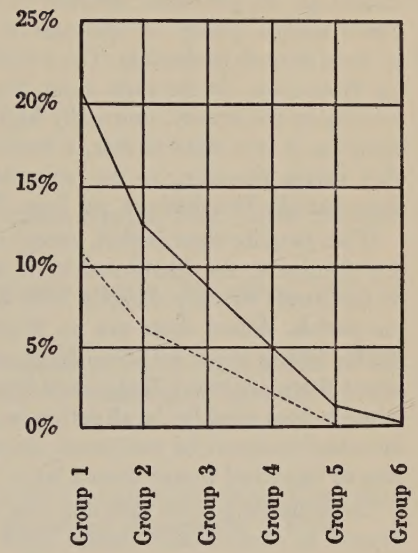
Graph A

Churches believed to be "open" ———
Churches with session policy .....



Graph B

Desegregated white churches ———
Inclusive white churches .....



Summary and Conclusions

It is too early in the process of tabulation and correlation of data to report "final results." We need, for example, to know more than we do now about the numerically small but strategically significant group of 38 desegregated Negro churches. More intensive study of the 609 desegregated white churches is needed to discover the range and depth of Negro participation in their life. Other relationships between categories of data not yet set up must be explored.[7]

Meanwhile certain salient facts already uncovered in the survey seem to make inescapable some tentative conclusions of importance to our church.

The first is that the white local church, considered statistically, seems to be a social as well as a Christian institution. It both influences and is influenced by the value structures of the culture and community in which it is situated. The question as to which exerts the more telling impact on the other cannot be answered in general. But in its racial behavior the local church strongly tends to reflect the prevailing winds of the social atmosphere that surrounds it, some individual Christians to the contrary.

In those sections of America where racial segregation has for generations been a built-in element of community life and racial tension now

[7] This report can be supplemented by the more popularly written article "Are We Segregated on Sunday?" appearing in *Presbyterian Life*, June 1, 1958.

dominates the social scene, a stated session policy of openness cannot be obtained without heavy cost, even if requested. Nor can a pastor's appraisal of openness be lightly given. In those sections where the racial situation is viewed as "no problem" because of the absence of Negroes and tension, a stated session policy of openness is not likely to be given unless sought by local church leadership. The subject simply does not ordinarily come up for discussion. At the same time, the pastors' appraisal of openness is, according to the survey, unusually high. In those sections in which the racial situation is in a state of flux, a session policy or a pastor's appraisal probably varies according to the percentage of Negro population in the immediate parish. This has not yet been determined from the survey.

What is quite clear is that, except in the South where other massive realities dominate, the likelihood of a white church's becoming desegregated in fact tends to vary directly with the percentage of Negro population in the parish. Where there are no Negroes, desegregation is exceedingly unlikely; where there are some Negroes, desegregation becomes more likely; where there are many Negroes, it becomes still more likely. However, many other factors qualify the situation, not the least of which is undoubtedly an increased measure of resistance among many white church members in the face of imagined threat from a large Negro population.

Certainly the proper task and role of the local white church now seems to depend to considerable degree upon whether that church finds itself in a situation of racial tension, racial stagnation, or racial flux. It is still not clear how Presbyterian churches in greater numbers can be more effectively urged to become God's agents for change rather than remain domesticated units of the existing social fabric.

The second tentative conclusion is that if Presbyterian churches really take seriously Christendom's professed belief in "a nonsegregated church and a nonsegregated society," they have at least two great unfinished tasks before them, depending upon the residential pattern of their parish.

Less than half (44 per cent) of our white churches located in racially mixed parishes (those with a Negro population of over 10 per cent) have opened their doors in fact. The rest have not. Their task with respect to the witness of the church to the oneness of all men in Christ is quite clearly to open the door of the church.

Probably 80 per cent of our churches located in segregated white parishes have opened the church door in theory. Their task with respect to the witness of our church to the oneness of all men in Christ is to open the door of the community so that the open church door may take on real significance.

Presumably one of the major tasks of the Negro Christian is to knock, and keep knocking, on both those doors until they are opened.

Further Reading

* "Social Deliverances," SOCIAL PROGRESS reprint, July, 1958. 15 cents, 6 cents each for 25 or more copies.

* "Houses and People," SOCIAL PROGRESS reprint, September, 1956. 15 cents, 6 cents each for 25 or more copies.

Interracial News Service, September-October, 1958 (approaches to desegregation in the area of private housing). Department of Interracial News Service, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y. Subscription price, $2.00 a year.

Interracial Neighborhoods in New Jersey Communities. State Committee Against Discrimination, 1100 Ramond Boulevard, Newark, N. J. Free.

"'Restricted' Area: Does It Pay?" a reprint from *U. S. News & World Report.* National Committee Against Discrimination in Housing, 35 W. 32d Street, New York 1, N. Y. Free.

"Housing Without Racial Barriers," *Social Action*, November, 1957. 289 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y. 25 cents.

Your Home in a Changing Neighborhood. Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations, 800 Commercial Trust Building, Philadelphia, Pa. Free.

"The New 'Gresham's Law of Neighborhoods'—Fact or Fiction," by Charles Abrams.

"Effects of Nonwhite Purchases on Market Prices of Residence," by Luigi M. Laurenti.

Reprints from *The Appraisal Journal*, available from National Committee Against Discrimination in Housing. Free.

** *Forbidden Neighbors*, by Charles Abrams. Harper & Brothers, 1955. $5.00.

** *The Wall Between*, by Anne Braden. Monthly Review Press, 1958. $5.00.

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** Order from your nearest Westminster Book Store: Witherspoon Building, Philadelphia 7, Pa.; 220 West Monroe Street, Chicago 6, Ill.; Room 201, 1501 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles 17, Calif.; 209 Ninth Street, Pittsburgh 22, Pa. (formerly United Presbyterian Book Store).

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